

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-10 are pending in this application. Claims 3 and 5 have been canceled. Claims 6-10 have been added.

The claims in this application are believed to be patentable over the cited art and the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Ueno in view of Merli et al. is respectfully traversed.

Ueno (U.S. Patent 3,399,257)

In Figure 1, two white stripes 2 appear to be radially outside the maximum tire section width point. In Figure 3, the two white stripes 2 are clearly radially outside the maximum tire section width point. The tire does not have bead cores and bead apexes. There is no lower sidewall region having a substantially straight profile.

Merli (U.S. Patent 4,279,286)

The ridge does not appear to extend continuously in the tire circumferential direction. This reference cannot teach the position of the radially outer end of the bead apex. There is no lower sidewall region having a substantially straight profile.

Therefore, it is believed that the amended claims are clearly patentable and distinguished over the two cited patents, either alone or in combination.

The combination of Merli et al. with Ueno is not applicable to the amended claims for the foregoing reasons. Also, the motivation to combine Merli et al. with Ueno is not clear in the rejection of the Office Action dated April 30, 2002. At the bottom of page 3 (the last two lines) and on the first two lines of page 4 of the outstanding Office Action, it is stated that "one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have readily appreciated the positioning of the vent emboss line and vent groove in a region that is adjacent to the bead apex as detailed above." On page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, first paragraph, the Examiner is discussing what one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been able to do with respect to the vent groove width specific to the type of decoration employed on the tire as depicted by Merli et al. However, Merli et al. is silent as to any quantitative measurement of the vent groove width L.

Since claim 2 is directed to the vent groove depth of between 0.2 and 0.5 mm is now dependent upon amended claim 1, claim 2 is clearly distinguishable over the combination of references Merli et al. and Ueno. Regarding claims 3 and 5, their rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of these claims.

Claim 4, which has been amended to be dependent upon newly amended claim 1, is believed to be distinguishable patentably over the art of record.

Newly added claims 6-10 are each dependent upon claim 1 and are directed to various limitations, mainly of a quantitative nature and being dependent upon claim 1, each of them is clearly patentable over the combination of the cited references.

In view of the foregoing arguments and amendments, reconsideration and allowance of the present application is respectfully solicited.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a three (3) months extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$920.00 is attached hereto.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Edward H. Valance (Reg. No. 19,896) at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the application by this Amendment.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

(Rev. 02/20/02)

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**IN THE SPECIFICATION:**

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 6, has been amended as follows:

--When a green tire is put in a vulcanizing mold and inflated to press the outer face of the tire against the inner face of the mold, the contact between the two faces is liable to delay near the radially outer end of a bead apex because the bead portion is relatively stiff. In such a portion, therefore, air between the tire and mold is liable to remain[s] and as a result, bareness of rubber is liable to occur on the outer face of the finished tire.--

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 14, has been amended as follows:

--In order to cause escape of air between a tire and mold, conventionally vent holes are provided at corresponding portions of the mold. However, the portions in which vent holes are necessary vary depending on tire components such as a hard rubber bead apex, carcass ply turnup, reinforcing cord layer and the like. Therefore, if positional unevenness of the end or edge of such tire component is large, air cannot be fully removed. Further, a more important point is that the mold cost is very high. If the internal structure of the tire is changed for some reason and the

position of the end or edge of a tire component is accordingly changed, it is necessary to remake the mold.--

The paragraph beginning on page 1, line 25 to line 8, page 2, has been amended as follows:

--In Japanese patent No. 2872920, a radial tire is disclosed wherein as [show] shown in Fig. 6, the convexly curved outer face of the tire sidewall portion SW is provided with a circumferentially extending groove G to prevent bareness of rubber. This groove G has a width of from 2 to 10 mm and a depth of from 0.5 to 1.5 mm, and the position of the groove G is such that the distance (A) measured radially inwardly from the radially outer end P of a bead apex Bap to the radially outer edge Ga of the groove G is in a range of from 0 to 7 mm. Although this groove G is effective, in order to prevent bareness of rubber without fail, an increase in the size especially depth Gc of the groove is unavoidable. As a result, the appearance and strength of the tire are liable to become worse.--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 3 and 5 have been canceled.

The claims have been amended as follows:

Claim 1. (Amended) A pneumatic tire comprising
a tread portion,

a pair of sidewall portions,

a pair of bead portions each with a bead core and a bead apex therein,

each said sidewall portion provided on the outer face with means of escaping air between the tire and a mold for vulcanizing the tire,

said means comprising

a circumferentially extending vent emboss line disposed adjacently to a radially outer end of the bead apex and

a circumferentially continuously extending vent groove adjoining the radially outside of the vent emboss line and having a depth of at least 0.15,

the sidewall portions each provided with a lower sidewall region having a substantially straight profile in a tire meridian section and extending radially inwardly from a position radially inside the maximum tire section width point towards the bead portion, and

said vent emboss line and vent groove disposed within said lower sidewall region so that a part having a positive extent is left on the radially outside of said vent groove and the radially inside of said vent emboss line.

Claim 4. (Amended) The pneumatic tire according to claim [3]
1, wherein

the bottom of the vent groove is substantially parallel to the straight profile of the lower sidewall region and is provided with emboss marks.

Claims 6-10 have been added.